



May 27, 2018

“Perfect Peace”

Isaiah 24 - 27

Pastor Gary Hamrick

We live in a world of trouble and difficulties, and no one is completely sheltered from trials. The good news is that God’s perfect peace is available to us! In this message, Pastor Gary helps us learn more about what it means to receive and rely on God’s peace for our lives when we fix our thoughts on him and trust him by faith.

### Isaiah’s Apocalypse

#### 1. Judgment of the Earth - Chapter 24

- a. **Isaiah 24:1-3** - *“See, the LORD is going to lay waste the earth and devastate it; he will ruin its face and scatter its inhabitants - it will be the same for priest as for people, for master as for servant, for mistress as for maid, for seller as for buyer, for borrower as for lender, for debtor as for creditor. The earth will be completely laid waste and totally plundered the LORD has spoken this word.”*
- b. **Revelation 8:7-11** - *“The first angel sounded his trumpet, and there came hail and fire mixed with blood, and it was hurled down upon the earth. A third of the earth was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up. The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a huge mountain,<sup>1</sup> all ablaze, was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea turned into blood, a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed. The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star,<sup>2</sup> blazing like a torch, fell from the sky on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water - the name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters turned bitter, and many people died from the waters that had become bitter.”*

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<sup>1</sup> This may be a reference to a huge asteroid.

<sup>2</sup> This may be a reference to a nuclear disaster.

- c. Pastor Gary said: “Don’t think to yourself, ‘What kind of a loving God would do this?’ ... When God brings judgment on the earth, that is his last wakeup call for a God-forsaking, Christ-rejecting world. Sometimes God will go to an extreme because people are so stubborn in their hearts and they’ve rejected him for so long that God will bring cataclysmic natural events and disasters upon the earth to wake people up – because he doesn’t want anyone to perish!”
    - i. **2 Peter 3:9–10** – *“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.”*
  - d. Pastor Gary said: “Don’t idolize [the planet]! That’s the problem in our culture today; it’s trending toward idolizing the planet. ... When [people] take God out of the equation, then suddenly the planet is the biggest thing, [which leads people to] idolize the created things rather than the Creator. ... [People] have inverted God’s whole system of what is right!”
    - i. **Romans 1:25** – *“They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator – who is forever praised. Amen.”*
2. Fulfillment of the Kingdom – Chapter 25
- a. **Isaiah 25:6–9** – *“On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine – the best of meats and the finest of wines. On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. In that day they will say, ‘Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation.’ ”*
  - b. These Scriptures declare that one day Jesus will be the sole ruler of the planet!
3. Punishment of the Wicked – Chapter 26
- a. **Isaiah 26:20–21** – *“Go, my people, enter your rooms and shut the doors behind you; hide yourselves for a little while until his wrath has passed by. See, the LORD is coming out of his dwelling to punish the people of the earth for their sins. The earth will disclose the blood shed upon her; she will conceal her slain no longer.”*
  - b. Pastor Gary said: “[These verses provide a picture] of the righteous being

preserved and spared from the wrath of God, which is consistent with other pictures [in the Bible] of the saints, or the righteous, being preserved from God's wrath. ... The punishment that comes upon the earth is for those who have rejected God and forsaken Christ; not for those who have already yielded their hearts to the Lord. There will be a day of reckoning for every human being. ... The day you surrender your life to his lordship is your day of reckoning. That is the day that you then are judged righteous - not because of [your] righteousness, but because of the righteousness of Christ..."

- i. **Romans 8:1** - *"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus..."*
- ii. **2 Corinthians 5:17-19a** - *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ... not counting men's sins against them."*
- iii. Pastor Gary shared two examples of the righteous being rescued:
- iv. Lot and his family were preserved through the wrath of God that came upon Sodom and Gomorrah.
- v. Noah and his family were preserved through the wrath of God that came through The Flood.

#### 4. Reestablishment of Israel - Chapter 27

- a. **Isaiah 27:2-3, 6** - *"In that day - 'Sing about a fruitful vineyard: I, the LORD, watch over it; I water it continually. I guard it day and night so that no one may harm it. ... In days to come Jacob will take root, Israel will bud and blossom and fill all the world with fruit."*
  - i. **Isaiah 5:7a** - *"The vineyard of the LORD Almighty is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are the garden of his delight."*
- b. When this was written, the Assyrians had already besieged the northern kingdom of Israel, and approximately 135 years later, the Babylonians would besiege the southern kingdom of Judah.
- c. Isaiah was writing about a time far beyond his own day, and that time would not come until May 14, 1948, when the nation of Israel was reestablished.
- d. Pastor Gary shared a statistic that demonstrates that the Lord has done exactly what he said he would do: The nation of Israel is smaller in size than the state of New Jersey, but it ranks 15<sup>th</sup> in the export of fresh fruits and vegetables worldwide!
- e. "... [a] desolate country whose soil is rich enough, but is given over wholly to weeds - a silent and mournful expanse... A desolation is here that not even imagination can grace with the pomp of life and action... We never saw a human being on the whole route... There was hardly a tree or a shrub anywhere. Even the olive and the cactus, those fast friends of the worthless

soil, had almost deserted the country.” – Mark Twain <sup>3</sup>

### God's Perfect Peace

5. **Isaiah 26:3-4** – *“You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord, is the Rock eternal.”*
  - a. Pastor Gary said: “The fact that these verses are nestled right in the middle of all of this apocalyptic information, speaks to me in two ways. ... [First,] in the midst of Tribulation (capital “T”) God’s people will have peace... in large part because... we won’t be here for the Tribulation. God will take us from the Earth and keep us safe [and] we won’t experience his wrath... [Second,] in the midst of tribulation (small “t”) God’s people will experience God’s peace. You and I will experience, over the course of our lifetime, tribulation. [We will experience various trials, difficulties, heartaches, and] things that we go through that we couldn’t imagine, and we weren’t prepared for. God wants to know that even in tribulation... his perfect peace will be with us.”
    - i. **1 Thessalonians 1:10** – *“... his Son from Heaven, whom he raised from the dead – Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.”*
6. **Isaiah 26:3** – *“[God] will keep...”*
  - a. God is a keeping God, one who will protect and guard us in all our ways.
  - b. Pastor Gary said: “Now, don’t misunderstand me. When [I] talk about God being a keeping God, it does not necessarily mean that he will keep you ‘from.’ Sometimes he will, but we also need to appreciate his keeping power ‘through.’ Sometimes God keeps us ‘from,’ [and] sometimes God keeps us ‘through.’ ... [If] all he ever did was keep us ‘from,’ how would we ever see his mighty hand? He has to keep us ‘through’ in order for us to recognize his grace, and his power, and his provision for us. ... [I’m sure God] keeps us from experiencing things and we need to regularly thank God for things that he’s saved us from that we don’t even know [about]. ... [We will most often] recognize his saving grace [when] he keeps us through [things].”
    - i. Pastor Gary shared the account from **Daniel 3**, concerning Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who, at the command of King Nebuchadnezzar had to go through the fiery furnace, and how they personally experienced God’s keeping grace and rescuing power!
7. **Isaiah 26:3** – *“... in perfect peace...”*
  - a. In Hebrew, this verse is written: *“shalom, shalom,”* to emphasize that God

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<sup>3</sup> Observations of Mark Twain on his visit to the Holy Land in 1867. *The Innocents Abroad*, published in London, 1881. – <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/mark-twain-quotations-on-judaism-and-israel>

- gives peace upon peace, undisturbed peace, and multiplied peace!
- b. Pastor Gary said: “Peace is not the absence of strife, because Jesus even warned us [that we would have troubles in life]. ... God’s peace is a deep down calm and quiet confidence of the soul. ... The peace of this world is very circumstantial. ... God’s peace is constant, so that whether life is great or life is hard, there’s [a] constant abiding, deep down quiet confidence in our soul.”
- i. **John 16:33** - *“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*
  - ii. **Ephesians 2:14** - *“For [the Lord] himself is our peace...”*
  - iii. **John 14:27** - *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”*
  - iv. **Isaiah 48:17-18** - *“I am the LORD your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go. If only you had paid attention to my commands, your peace would have been like a river...”*
    1. Pastor Gary commented on Horatio Spafford’s hymn, *It Is Well With My Soul*, and how his use of words demonstrate the contrast between experiencing peace is like a river (constantly flowing) and sorrows like roiling sea billows (in waves).
8. **Isaiah 26:3** - *“... him whose mind is steadfast...”*
- a. Pastor Gary said: “If you don’t wrestle with [your] mind, and get [your] mind together, you will not be able to enjoy and experience God’s perfect peace.”
  - b. **2 Corinthians 10:5** - *“... take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”*
9. **Isaiah 26:3-4** - *“... because he trusts in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord, is the Rock eternal.”*
- a. Pastor Gary said: “There’s a tricky thing about trust, [in that] it requires faith. ... [Children] are the most wonderful examples of faith and trust. ... May we learn to trust God like children to trust our heavenly Father in the same way.”
  - b. Trust is the firm belief in the reliability of God. It is believing that he loves you, he’s good, he has the power to help you, he wants to help you, and he will help you!

### Discussion Questions

1. Read **Isaiah 26:3-4** to provide a foundation for your Bible study time.

2. Read and discuss each of the four points in the outline Pastor Gary provided concerning Isaiah's Apocalypse. (See #1 through #4 above)
3. Read and discuss [Isaiah 26:3-4](#).
4. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's remarks concerning God's perfect peace. (See #5a and #6b above)
5. Read and discuss the Scriptures Pastor Gary shared concerning the fact that God's peace is constant and abiding even in times of difficulty. (See #7b above)
6. Spend time talking about what it means to have a steadfast mind. (See #8 above)
7. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's remarks about what it means to trust the Lord. (See #9 above)
8. Close your time in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads.

\* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).